

# The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, May 27, 1993

Published Since 1877

## Don't dismiss small legal matters as unimportant

By Paul G. Jones II

Numerous activities which appear to be harmless or at least insignificant can expose a church to serious legal consequences. Inappropriate use by individuals members or non-members of privileges granted solely to the church can often create untenable consequences.

### Designated Accounts

Within the limits of the law, a church may receive a gift or contribution designated for a specific cause or program that is a part of its normal purpose. Once the church has accepted the contribution with the specific limitations attached to it (designation), normally the gift cannot be used for or redirected to any other purpose.

A designated account is an area of the budget that the church normally cannot alter or modify. Generally, it is a violation of federal and state statutes to move money from one designated account to another or to transfer funds from a designated account into the general fund of the church.

Neither the legitimacy of the need nor the desperateness of the situation allows for movement of designated contributions.

To protect itself, the church should establish written policies regarding the creation and use of funds in a designated account. The more designated funds, the more potential for abuse and subsequent legal problems.

### Copyright Infringement

One of the most flagrant ongoing violations of federal law regards copyright infringement and violations of copyright. Such copyright infringement is subject to harsh and burdensome penalties.

Materials that are copyrighted normally cannot be reproduced in any form without the expressed written permission of the copyright holder, and often require payment of royalties.

Making unauthorized copies of music, newsletters, books, magazines, computer software, video and audio tapes, and other copyrighted and commercially available materials is a criminal act.

The U.S. Copyright Act provides a "fair use" defense, but a recent federal court decision (*American Geophysical Union v. Texaco, Inc.*) demonstrated the difficulty of establishing such a defense.

Courts have generally held that material produced and copyrighted for commercial purposes is a part of the livelihood of the producer. Thus, copyright infringement is the theft of potential livelihood of the copyright owner and/or his estate or business.

Computer software and music are the primary points of violation in a church. Normally, software is sold to a person or business as the licensee who can only use the software in a computer owned by the licensee.

Sharing or duplicating a piece of computer software is a serious violation of federal law. The computer software industry is prosecuting violators to the full extent of the law.

Additional information on how to protect

churches from software violations can be received from the Business Software Alliance at 1-800-688-2721.

Likewise, music is generally under copyright and any reproduction of any amount is a violation of federal copyright laws.

Many churches purchase a limited number of a musical composition and make additional copies as needed for rehearsal, practice, or performance. Such activity is a direct violation of the Copyright Act unless prior written permission has been granted.

The fine for such violation can be of almost astronomical proportions.

Additional information on how to protect the church from music copyright infringement can be received from the Church Music Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

### Postal Permits and Mailing Lists

Many churches invite legal problems with the U. S. Postal Service when they allow outside groups and individuals to use the postal permits of the church.

The bulk rate postal permit is granted only to an IRC 501(c)(3) tax exempt body for its exclusive use. It is a violation of federal law to allow an individual member to use a non-profit permit for personal or business use and/or to allow another group to use the church's permit.

Moreover, the mailing lists of a church should not be made available to political candidates and those who would use it in commercial ventures.

Violation of this law could result in the loss of the church's tax exempt status. Pictorial directories can be distributed to the membership, but it is unwise to make such available to non-members and commercial and political groups.

### Commercial Driver's License

Churches which own and operate larger vans and buses are required by state and federal law to allow only drivers with valid commercial licenses to operate the vehicles.

The commercial drivers license laws dictate that the driver of any vehicle which is certified by the manufacturer to carry more than 15 passengers—including the driver—must have a commercial license.

The Mississippi Department of Public Safety can provide information on the licensing of drivers of church vehicles.

Adequate licensing and the coverage of all vehicles with adequate insurance can prevent many future problems.

### Form 1099

Churches who pay a non-employee more than \$600 in any calendar year are required to file an IRS Form 1099.

Evangelists, musicians or musical groups, outside or independent contractors, guest preachers, and others who serve the church and receive \$600 or more annually must be

reported to the IRS.

Form 1099 is not an option and failure to submit it is a violation of the federal tax laws. Questions about this should be addressed to a tax attorney, certified public accountant, or other tax authority.

### Reimbursed Expenses and Allowances

A church may provide non-taxed allowances to its ministers for the purpose of enabling them to carry out their professional responsibilities.

The amount that is non-taxable cannot exceed the actual expenses for a meeting, including food, lodging, and transportation, or the fair rental value of a home and normal utilities and maintenance, or the mileage reimbursement for actual business-related mileage computed on the basis of the current IRS mileage allowance.

Any amount of an allowance over the actual business-related cost is normally treated as taxable income and must be reported to the IRS.

The church is responsible for any reimbursements which it makes and these should be based on the presentation of invoices and receipts to justify the expenditure.

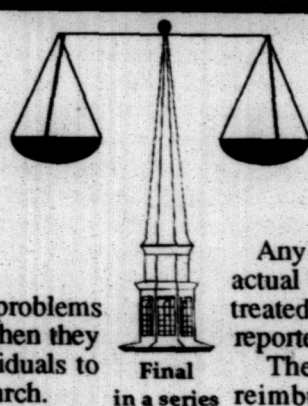
An advance on expenses can be given but reimbursement for overage is assumed.

Business travel is normally traveling between a place of employment and points directly related to the work. Personal and non-business related trips should not be included in business-related travel expenses.

Telephone expenses are another point of possible violation. Local telephone service is normally a part of a housing allowance.

Moreover, reimbursement for business-related long distance calls is normally the responsibility of the church. Personal long distance calls are not tax exempt and if paid by the church should normally be reported as taxable income.

### Church and State



Final in a series

### Personal Liability of Officers and Members

The IRS holds a "responsible person" in a church organization liable for failure to meet obligations normally related to the office or membership.

The most significant federal reporting obligation for most churches is the withholding and payment of payroll taxes.

Section 6672 of the Internal Revenue Code permits the IRS to assess a penalty of as much as 100 percent of the amount of taxes either not withheld, or withheld and not paid, to the government.

Officers, directors, and often even members of non-profit organizations can be penalized for failure to faithfully carry out their mandated responsibilities.

The provisions of federal tax law are extensive and constantly changing. Recent court decisions have clarified certain portions of the law (*Carter v. United States*) and current legislation in Congress could further change the tax code.

On February 4, 1993, the IRS revised Policy Statement P-5-60 regarding the determination of responsible person.

Any questions about legal responsibility, personal liability, or interpretation of tax law should be addressed to a licensed attorney and the counsel of such should be carefully heeded.

Avoidance of adequate legal counsel can greatly jeopardize the existence and ministry of a church and create burdensome liability on members individually and as a body.

Materials on these issues can be obtained from the Christian Action Commission (CAC) of the Mississippi Baptist Convention by writing to CAC, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800.

The writer of these articles is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other personal service. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional person should be sought.

Jones is executive director, Christian Action Commission, MBC.

### Briefly...

#### Many crowns

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (EP)—A shoebox wrapped in old Christmas wrap and mailed anonymously to the Danish Bible Society contained 500,000 crowns (\$80,000) and a handwritten note stating, "For Children's Bibles." The society will be able to supply 20,000 children's Bibles with the money.

#### Russian Luke

NEW PARIS, Indiana (EP)—A 40-foot container holding 900,000 copies of the Gospel of Luke in the Russian language is scheduled to arrive in Russia next month. The shipment, by New Missionary Press of New Paris, is the third shipment to Russia from the company since 1991.

#### Music

LOS ANGELES (EP)—World Vision, the largest Christian relief and development agency in the world, has attracted a number of Christian musicians to its Artist Associate program to encourage concert goers to get involved with World Vision. Participants include Wayne Watson, White Heart, and Margaret Becker.

NASHVILLE (EP)—A pipe bomb destroyed the granite-embedded mailbox outside the home of Amy Grant and Gary Chapman shortly after midnight on April 17. Local authorities are investigating.



## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

## A challenge for the SBC family

Former Baptist Sunday School Board President Lloyd Elder has published "Calling the Family Back Together." It is a research report to the Southern Baptist family and has some interesting proposals.

He predicts we are moving toward a crisis by 2000 A.D. "We have already crested the mountain, are going down the other side at a dangerous speed, and no one can or will put on the brakes." Stop the controversy now! says Elder.

The odds are not too good that SBC leaders will take heed. Critical issues, Elder declares, are: 1) the controversy has a life of its own, is deepening its hold on Southern Baptist life, and continues its destructive course throughout the denominational family; and 2) the "convention faction" of the SBC family is dominant, if not completely in control of the convention, its agencies, and institutions.

The "moderate faction" is a voting minority of faithful Southern Baptists and some are moving from political confrontation to other fellowship/missionary structures. Then there is the "people faction" in the family with the largest number of members, many

of whom are unaware of the controversy or so tired of it they just want it to go away... but it won't "just go away."

Since 1979, in the division of votes averages for the SBC president, 54.5% have voted for the elected president and 45.4% have voted for the defeated candidates.

You are a "stakeholder" in this kingdom business and your share is at risk. Elder believes the controversy can be stopped and Southern Baptist people can forge a bipartisan, biblical coalition to get on with the main business of missions and education. This coalition will take a movement of informed, aroused, Baptist people and visionary state convention leadership if we see it happen.

This calls for enlarged local church participation, establishment of an SBC/state convention governing partnership, and the command from the stockholders/owners to "just do it."

For 14 years the SBC leadership has done little to involve state conventions in a governing partnership. It is firmly in control and apparently has little desire to share this power.

This desire was evidenced by the latest nominations to SBC boards

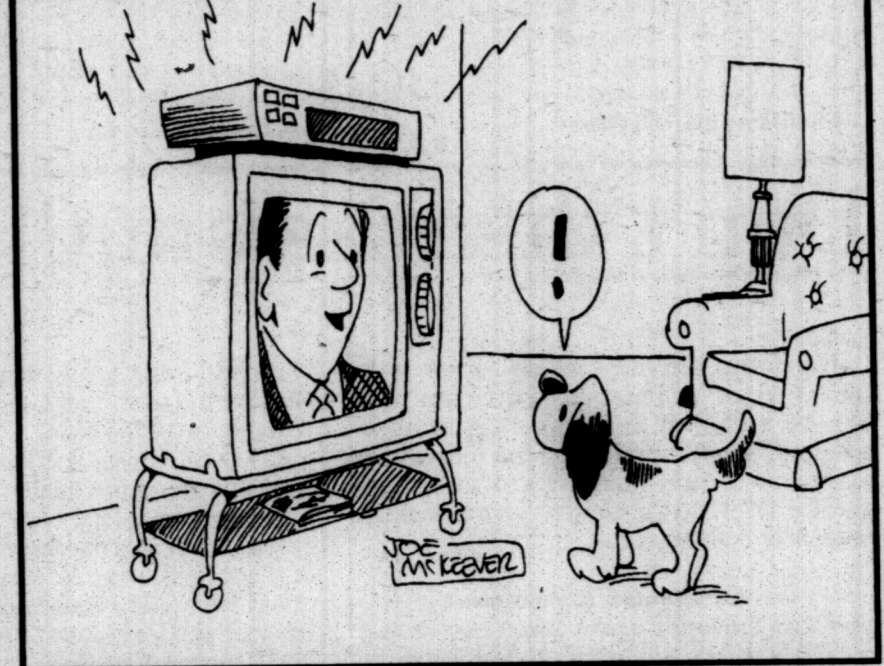
and agencies from Mississippi. Two men, appointed by the SBC, selected the trustees and other officers, without any consultation with the state convention president, vice president, or any officer in the state convention organization. This is the power in the SBC control system and is not likely to be shared.

Lloyd Elder and associates have a good plan and this editor wishes them well in what could be the last attempt to hold the Southern Baptist family together.

Elder concludes his report with a chilling statement on common sense in business: "Research on customer service indicates that it is five times more expensive to get a new customer than it is to keep the ones you have. One study indicates that 96% of unhappy customers never complain about bad treatment, but 90% simply will not come back; and each of those unhappy customers will tell his or her story at least nine times."

It will take a miracle to bring the Southern Baptist family together, but we have a God of miracles. God can forgive sins and heal the land when his conditions are met. It's not too late for repentance and the healing hand of reconciliation.

"FRIENDS, THIS IS MIKE SKILES INVITING YOU TO WORSHIP WITH US AT SHILOH CHURCH AND HEAR SOME OF THE FINEST PREACHING EVER PREACHED. YOU'D BETTER HURRY — EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN OUR PASTOR WILL NOT BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN THIS QUALITY FOR LONG!"



## Gone but not forgotten

I met him at college. World War II had not been over long and both of us were on the G.I. Bill. We came from neighboring counties in south Mississippi and spoke the same language. We carried on a lot of nonsense but there were times of deep thought and reflection between us. We became close friends.

For more than 40 years we shared the experiences of life, went on family vacations together, and discussed the real issues of life. Most of all we were just comfortable being with each other. He was the epitome of a "merry heart doeth good like a medicine."

My friend died four years ago. Matthew Arnold wrote, "Friend, who set forth at our side, Falter, are lost in the storm. We, we only are left!"

He taught me more about friendship than any person and did it in such an effortless way. Heaven

must be a friendlier place.

It is said that "friends are the golden nuggets in a world of gravel and sand." Longfellow said the same thing in a nicer way:

"I shot an arrow into the air,  
It fell to earth I knew not where;

I breathed a song into the air,  
It fell on earth, I knew not where;

Long, long afterward, in an oak  
I found the arrow still unbroke  
And the song from beginning to end

I found again in the heart of a friend."

The passing of time causes one to assess friendship. Assuredly you do not have any to spare. "The best way to destroy an enemy," said the sage, "is to make a friend of him." To be a friend, to have a friend, is worth more than gold.

— GH

## Guest Opinion...

## How do we get a New SBC from here?

## Part 4

By Russell H. Dilday

How do we go about shaping a New Southern Baptist Convention? Some might conclude that any suggestions are "inescapably a contribution to utopian literature." Nevertheless, even utopian ideas can provoke significant discussion, and if that should be one modest result of these essays, the effort has been worthwhile. So, here are some ways we can help bring the dream into reality:

1. We can encourage and inform Ed Young, the SBC president, in his declared efforts to leave the past behind and bring Southern Baptists together again under the banner of missions and evangelism. He has appointed a cluster of committees to study various components of denominational life, and this has potential for renewal.

Clearly, any substantive changes in the near future can only be initiated by those who, by virtue of political victories, now hold elected denominational positions. They are the only ones who can make key appointments, set goals and objectives, and even mandate cer-

tain actions. Since their denominational influence is no longer threatened by opposing parties, these leaders can afford the risk of broader, more inclusive participation. They can once again make appointments based on appropriate criteria other than party loyalty.

On the other hand, those who disagreed with the ones who are now in power can suspend their disagreements and cooperate with them in reshaping the convention (even if initiated by "the other side") to unite the family and chart our course into the next millennium.

2. Another way forward is education. (You would expect me to list that one.) In the initial article of this series, I stated that Southwestern Seminary seems providentially positioned to help our convention find its shape for the future. That conviction was reinforced when, at a recent reception, I welcomed another group of new students. I was reminded again that over 40% of all masters and doctoral students in SBC seminaries are enrolled at Southwestern.

What an enormous opportunity the seminary has to influence the pastors, church vocational staff,

missionaries, and denominational leaders who will eventually shape Southern Baptist life in A.D. 2001 and beyond. By enriching the curriculum to include required courses in Baptist heritage, ministerial leadership, church development, and future trends, we will be able, so to speak, to shape the shapers.

But the seminary has a broader task beyond the training of students. By means of scholarly research, critical thinking, and thoughtful conversation about doctrinal matters, we also lead the convention in doing theology. That is, we are to help our Baptist people understand God truly, help them discern his word for the church today, and help them articulate and defend their distinctive beliefs.

3. However, the most effective mechanism for shaping the NSBC may not be seminary education or intentional organizational efforts by committees, as important as these are. The NSBC may emerge more naturally from informal, simultaneous involvement by individuals across the convention who "unofficially" contribute to shaping the future. That's how each

one of us can have a part in shaping the NSBC.

When we Baptists begin to dream again about new beginnings, when we start talking to each other about possibilities, and, more importantly, when we ask the Lord to bless our quest, a shared vision begins to emerge among our people. That's the Baptist way, and we can be sure that such a vision empowered by the Holy Spirit is irrepressible and will eventually prevail.

The latest management theory, called TQM (Total Quality Management), suggests that instead of focusing on an organization's bottom line, managers should focus on involving each employee in

shaping the organization. "Quality teams" are named from across divisional lines, and each team is asked to solve certain problems and implement improvements. According to TQM, when the people who make up the organization begin to share the vision for quality, the bottom line will take care of itself.

Perhaps the goal of actualizing the NSBC can be achieved the same way — through a common vision so exciting in its possibilities that it challenges all of us to cooperate toward its ultimate fulfillment.

Dilday is president, Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

## The Baptist Record

VOLUME 117 (ISSN-0005-5778) NUMBER 16  
Published weekly except weeks of July 4 and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist Convention, 515 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$7.35 a year payable in advance. Second class postage paid at Jackson, Mississippi. The Baptist Record is a member of Southern Baptist Press Association.

Editor.....Guy Henderson  
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Advertising/News writer.....Teresa Dickens  
Editorial Associate.....Florence Larrimore  
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Baptist Record Advisory Committee: Deborah Brunt, Corinth; Susan Kinton, Walnut Grove; Randy Turner, Laurel; Horace Kerr, Brandon; Grady Collins, Philadelphia; Teresa Dickens, secretary.  
Postmaster: Send changes of address to The BAPTIST RECORD, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205.

Send news, communication, and address changes to The Editor, Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205 (601) 968-3800



# Annuity Board drops Kmart over porno, proxy loss

By Ken Camp

DALLAS (BP)—After unsuccessful attempts to influence Kmart policy regarding the sale of offensive materials at its Waldenbooks subsidiary, the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention last month sold its stock in the corporation.

Following trustee action on Nov. 3, 1992, the Annuity Board announced in January it had filed a resolution with Kmart Corporation requesting its inclusion in

proxy materials and consideration by shareholders at their annual meeting May 25.

The resolution asked Kmart's board of directors to instruct the corporation management to "stop the promotion, display, and sale in its Waldenbooks subsidiary of literature and other media that is largely devoted to the description of sexual encounters or that has a graphic depiction of exploitative sex and/or gratuitous violence."

Annuity Board President Paul W. Powell said at the time that he had asked every church pension board in the nation — and all Baptist foundations and state conventions — to study and support the resolution.

But in April, the board learned that its efforts to be included in proxy material and on the stockholders meeting agenda were unsuccessful, according to Thomas E. Miller Jr., Annuity

Board senior vice president for public relations.

"The president had said that if we were not successful in the shareholders resolution, then we should divest ourselves of the stock in a prudent and orderly fashion," Miller said.

Miller had reported earlier that on Dec. 10, 1992, the Annuity Board held 221,200 shares of Kmart stock. He did not release the number of shares held at the time the decision was made to divest but confirmed that all stock had been sold. Little additional information was made available.

"It had become obvious to us that we could not respond to every question about individual stocks, so the decision was made to stop doing that," he said.

Kmart has been targeted for boycott by Donald Wildmon's American Family Association since March 1990 because of "pornographic" materials sold at its Waldenbooks subsidiary.

The Annuity Board began addressing Kmart's Waldenbooks policies in the spring of 1992 and had sought through several avenues to use its shareholder status to influence Kmart policy.

Following the Annuity Board's

trustee meeting last August, Powell wrote a letter to Joseph E. Antonini, Kmart's chairman and chief executive officer, saying Kmart was "making a conscious decision to pander to baser instincts" through its Waldenbooks policies on the sale of offensive materials.

"Our own independent investigation has caused us to conclude that Waldenbooks does, indeed, offer products we consider grossly offensive to prevailing community standards," Powell wrote. Antonini did not reply directly.

In addition to the Annuity Board shareholders resolution, the United Methodist General Board of Pensions submitted its own resolution asking Kmart directors to provide shareholders a special report on Waldenbooks policies and practices concerning the selection of "adult fiction" and magazines and its policy on the display and sale of such materials.

By March, Kmart notified the Methodist board Waldenbooks had withdrawn from sale its "Blue Moon" series of adult books.

Camp is public relations director for the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

## The Baptist Record

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Thursday, May 27, 1993

Published Since 1877

### Intolerance of SBC moderates criticized by Southern's Mohler

By Mark McCormick

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—Though he had planned to stay in the background until he took over Aug. 1, the newly elected president of Southern Seminary has gone on the offensive, accusing his detractors of clinging to their own agendas at the expense of the seminary.

In an interview the week of May 10, R. Albert Mohler Jr. blasted the intolerance of moderates who claim that conservatives like him are unwilling to listen to differing views.

"If there is fundamentalism here, it is the fundamentalism of the left

which will not allow for a diversity of opinion," Mohler said.

Mohler, 33-year-old editor of Georgia Baptists' *Christian Index*, said he has been stung by criticism that he is a fundamentalist pawn, narrow minded, an opportunist, and one who lacks the integrity and experience to lead the institution.

In light of such criticism and his realization that the "integrity of the church is on the line," Mohler said he decided to share some of his vision for the seminary.

The fact that conservatives now control the denomination is a clear

sign the majority of Southern Baptists felt a course correction was in order, and the seminary is only returning to its roots, he said.

"I don't come with an angry agenda; I don't come with a negative agenda," Mohler said. "I come with a very positive agenda. I don't come as an outsider. I come as one who knows this institution and knows it well."

"We are not an uncommitted institution where academic freedom means the ability or right to advocate any position."

He said when faculty members join the seminary they sign the Abstract of Principles — the seminary's guiding document — with the understanding "that in so doing they pledge to teach in accordance with, and not contrary to, that confession."

Mohler said it frustrates him that the seminary's heritage of theological conservatism is being compromised to keep pace with expectations of "secular society."

An example of this, he said, has been the attention given to the issues of the ordination of women as pastors, which he said has eclipsed other important issues.

Mohler said he has stated that he finds no biblical support for women as pastors, and he expressed concern that the seminary could be deluding female students into believing that many Southern Baptist churches are calling women as ministers. Since the Abstract of Principles doesn't address the issue, it is not one the seminary can act on, he said.

Mohler added that "women are welcome within all of the degree programs of this seminary," and noted that the seminary doesn't call ministers, it only trains them.

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### Baylor regents give OK to seminary in fall 1994

By Ken Camp

DALLAS (ABP) — The Baylor University board of regents voted unanimously May 21 to open the George W. Truett Theological Seminary in 1994, pledging not to duplicate existing seminaries but to offer a distinctive approach to ministry preparation.

"We're not competing with any of the existing seminaries," said Herbert Reynolds, president of Baylor University in Waco, Texas. "We are very interested in seeing what we can do in a distinctive kind of way."

Seminary classes and administrative offices will be located at First Church of Waco, but the adminis-

tration plans to build a multi-purpose building on the Baylor University campus within the next 10 years, Reynolds explained. Enrollment will be limited to 50 students the first year with a maximum enrollment of 150 projected after three years.

The faculty will be all Baptist but not necessarily all Southern Baptist. It will include about a half dozen professors and expand to more than 15 within three years, Reynolds said.

Camp is director of public relations for Baptist General Convention of Texas.

### KJV still tops, losing steam

GLENDAL, Calif. (ABP) — The King James Version of the Bible remains the most popular translation in America, but its strong influence could die out within the near future as adults who are now over age 65 pass on.

That's the finding of a new nationwide poll on Bible-reading habits of Americans by the Barna Research Group of Glendale, Calif.

Nearly one-third of American adults claim they still prefer the King James translation, which was authorized by King James of England and published in 1611. The only other translation preferred by more than 5% of the population is the modern New International Version.

According to the Barna study,

use of the King James peaks with adults over age 65, with 45% of that age group reading the KJV.

The popularity of the KJV declines precipitously among "baby busters" — adults 18-27 years old — with only 18% preferring the KJV.

Other findings from the poll: — More women than men regularly read the Bible (54% to 36%).

— Bible reading declines as income levels increase, from 54% of those earning less than \$20,000 annually to 30% of those earning more than \$60,000.

— Only 15% of Americans who do not attend church read the Bible once or more per week; compared with 54% of regular churchgoers.



### Boxing Shoes

Robble Seltz (left) and Douglas Rash, both employees of Crestwood Baptist Center in Jackson, box up donated shoes from the second floor of Main Street Shoes in Yazoo City. Owner Lynn Williams said the shoes had been accumulating for decades, since the days her grandparents ran Ingram Shoe Store in the same location. To date, nearly 5,500 pairs of shoes of every style and color have been donated to charity organizations in the Yazoo City and Jackson areas. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



# Churches can assume crucial role in health care reform

By Mark Wingfield

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP) — The church can play a role in health-care reform by teaching people how to die and how to experience wellness through spirituality, speakers said during a conference on "The Church's Challenge in Health."

The event, sponsored by the Baptist Center for Ethics, was held at Southside Church in Birmingham, Ala., May 12-13. About 185 people registered for the conference, including Baptist physicians, nurses, hospital administrators, pastors, and teachers.

The conference included a panel discussion about options in health-care reform. One of the issues that surfaced repeatedly on that panel and among other speakers was the enormous amount of money Americans spend fending off terminal illness and natural death due to old age.

For example, 80% of all money spent on health care in the United States is expended in the last six months of a person's life, said Jerry Hickson, chief of general pediatrics at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville.

This expense could be reduced if the church would help people learn to deal with death, he said. Further, Christians could set an example for keeping families together and reduce costs through means

such as respite care for the dying, Hickson suggested.

The church should be concerned about helping sick people because Jesus was concerned about helping

themselves when the circumstances of life cannot be changed.

The 21st century will bring greater emphasis on the role of spirituality in wellness, said

**Healthy living requires living from the inside out rather than from the outside in.**

**—Chuck Bugg, prof. of preaching Southern Seminary**

sick people during his earthly ministry, said David Sapp, pastor of Derbyshire Church, Richmond, Va.

"Healing is a gift... a gift born of the compassion and heart of God," he said.

However, health must not be made into a god, Sapp warned. "If we make health our god, hospitals our temples, and doctors our priests, we follow a health that will ultimately fail."

All people eventually will die, he noted.

Healthy living requires living from the inside out rather than from the outside in, said Chuck Bugg, professor of preaching at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

People who live from the outside in are shaped by circumstances, he said, while people who live from the inside out learn to change

Thomas Droege, associate director of the Interfaith Health Resource Center of the Carter Center in Atlanta.

"Faith has always been a factor in healing, whenever and wherever

**Doctor urges . . .**

## Work against "national disaster" threat

By Mark Wingfield

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP) — Christians need to get over their homophobia and realize AIDS is a "national disaster" that threatens all people, a medical professor who works with AIDS patients told a group of Baptists.

"Throw your homophobic fears out the window. They don't count. That's not the issue," Michael Saag said during a conference on "The Church's Challenge in Health" sponsored by the Baptist Center for Ethics May 12-13 in Birmingham, Ala.

Saag is associate professor of medicine at the University of Alabama-Birmingham and director of the university's AIDS outpatient clinic.

AIDS is perceived as a homosexual issue only because it hit the gay community first, he explained. Had AIDS appeared in the 1940s, it might have hit servicemen the same way venereal disease did then, he added.

Calling AIDS "the VD of the 1980s and 1990s," Saag said AIDS is "no different than any other sexually transmitted disease." Saag himself has treated more than 15,000 AIDS patients.

Future AIDS cases will impact heterosexuals as much or more than homosexuals, Saag predicted. The number of Americans who already have died from AIDS equals three-and-a-half times the number of Americans who died in the Vietnam War, he said. And the number who will die of AIDS this year alone equals the U.S. casualties in Vietnam, he added.

"The epidemic is just beginning," Saag warned.

He showed statistical projections to buttress his point that the number of AIDS cases is multiplying every year and moving strongly into the heterosexual population.

Although most of the Americans who currently have full-blown AIDS were infected through homosexual encounters, many more of the people who currently carry the HIV virus that eventually leads to AIDS became infected through heterosexual sex, he

explained.

"Hope keeps people well and it facilitates healing.... Hope is an expression of faith. Keeping hope alive is what the church is about."

But in the last days of this century, health-care reform is urgently needed, said Emmett Johnson, president of Baptist Health Systems in Birmingham. "We're right at that last minute before we fall off the cliff," he asserted.

Health-care costs in America have increased at more than twice the rate of inflation in the last 40 years, Vanderbilt's Hickson reported. While general inflation has been 300% since 1950, health-care spending has increased 700%, he said.

explained.

And most AIDS victims are young people — between 20 and 45 — cut down in the prime of life, he added.

These statistics demand to grab the church's attention, Saag declared.

"For too long we as a society have turned our backs on this epidemic and pretended it didn't exist," he said, noting that in the future "it will affect you in ways you cannot imagine."

This denial has happened in large measure because AIDS has been linked with homosexuality, Saag said.

"We are supposed to be a compassionate people," Saag lamented. "And frankly, we are anything but compassionate. The compassion you preach about on Sunday morning, it's not out there."

America has "a crisis, an emergency of overwhelming proportions screaming at us and we've done virtually nothing but hating," he said.

Saag advocates teaching adults and children the facts about AIDS at home and in churches. Americans also need to be taught to take responsibility for their personal

The causes of medical inflation are many, Hickson said. He cited the self-interests, education, and risks that impact physicians; costs of medical education; consumers' high expectations; the influence of the way health-care providers are paid; malpractice protection costs; and the increasing costs of hospitalization that have nothing to do with health care.

There are many forces pushing for more spending but few pushing for conservation, Hickson charged. He said Americans have been overcome with the false security of use-now, pay-later medicine.

Wingfield is news director for the Kentucky Western Recorder.

behavior, he said.

"The uninfected need a message to be responsible," Saag said. "The church is an excellent place to start, but the home is the best place to start."

Children and teens need to be taught that "the only safe sex is abstinence," the doctor declared.

However, he said teens who obviously won't be responsive to a plea for abstinence need to know they should find some protection through such means as condoms.

There is no data to support the claim that sex education promotes teens to engage in more sex, he charged.

However, he said children need to be taught that when they take on adult decisions, they face adult consequences.

Parents and churches must do all they can to fend off the spread of AIDS, he urged. "We are in a war, and we're losing badly."

"I am sick and tired of watching young people die. And I am sick and tired of watching us watch young people die and do nothing but hate."

Wingfield is news director for the Kentucky Western Recorder.

## Composer/author has faith in utility of small church music

By Charles Willis

NASHVILLE (BP) — Joe Parks says he believes musicians can be as much service to God in a small church as in a large one. And to support that conviction he devotes most of his time as a composer and arranger to producing music for small-church choirs.

Parks, who lives in Chattanooga, Tenn., and is the author of *Song-leading Made Easy*, recently released by Convention Press, spoke to more than 30 participants in a Seminar for Music Leaders in the Smaller Membership Church in mid-March at the Baptist Sunday School Board.

"God has a plan for each of our lives," Parks said, "and if that's in a small church, be content with it."

Working with a smaller membership church does not have to result in stagnant service, he insisted.

"A lot of choir directors have two years worth of (music) material, but don't ever get fed from other sources," he observed, "but periodicals, such as those produced by the Sunday School Board, are among the best resources for bivocational choir directors."

"Buy fresh music occasionally," he urged, "and check in to music lending plans in associational libraries."

Parks, who has close to 1,000 titles to his credit among several different publishers, said he has done about 95% of his musical compositions for small choirs

because he believes the need is greatest in those churches.

"The majority of our (Southern Baptist) churches are under 350 members," he said, "and the average choir in those churches has 18 persons — 15 women and three men."

And Parks said he takes into consideration the needs of people who work at a full-time job and also direct the music for their churches.

For people who direct music in a small church, Parks suggested five options for training to improve their success and sense of achievement in a music program:

1) Take advantage of training offered by the local Southern Baptist association.

2) Attend state Baptist convention retreats for musicians.

3) If possible, attend national seminars such as those offered by the Sunday School Board.

4) Take vacation time to attend conferences at Glorieta or Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Centers.

5) Learn music wherever you can through private lessons or classes at a nearby university.

"Set a long-range goal," he suggested. "See where you can go."

The Seminar for Music Leaders in the Smaller Membership Church was sponsored by the board's Church Music Ministries Department.

Willis writes for the Baptist Sunday School Board.

## Seminaries set meetings for '93 Houston convention

Seminaries of the Southern Baptist Convention have announced the following meetings during the 1993 Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Houston, Texas:

**New Orleans Seminary**  
Breakfast meeting, 7:30 a.m., Hyatt Regency Hotel; \$8 in advance, \$10 in Houston.

**Southeastern Seminary**  
Luncheon meeting, noon, Hyatt Regency, \$12.

**Golden Gate Seminary**  
Luncheon, 12:30 p.m., George Brown Convention Center, \$12.

**Southern Seminary**  
Luncheon, 1 p.m., Hyatt Regency, \$14.50 now, \$18 at the Convention.

**Southwestern Seminary**  
Luncheon, noon, George Brown Convention Center, \$12.

**Midwestern Seminary**  
Luncheon, 12:15 p.m., George Brown Convention Center, \$15 advance purchase, \$18 at Houston.

**Advance tickets**  
Advance tickets can be ordered from alumni offices of the seminaries. All meetings will be held Wednesday, June 16.





While chaplains like Steve Smith (second from right) conducted Bible study during Operation Restore Hope in Somalia, newspapers in that Islamic country printed lurid accusations of Christian misconduct. (BP Photo by Mark Sandlin)

## Somali media accuse Christians of crimes

MOGADISHU, Somalia (BP)—Articles printed in Somalia newspapers vividly illustrate fears and misconceptions Muslims have about the presence of Christians:

— Christian prostitutes seduce Somali Muslims to give them AIDS.

— Starving Somali children are kidnapped from feeding centers and shipped to Sweden to be raised by Christian families.

— Missionaries operate beauty salons to entrap Somali youth.

— American troops ("30,000 Jewish soldiers") came to the North African country not for humanitarian reasons but to destroy Islam and prepare to loot the country of its mineral and oil wealth.

— Christian groups oppose peace negotiations since the end of the civil war would end their opportunities to make converts.

These stories may not make newspapers in New York, London, or Paris but they are routine in the Somali press, dominated by militant Muslims who resent the cultural invasion by Christianity of their country and intend to resist it as violently as necessary.

"It's difficult to determine how large a segment of Somali society these articles speak for," one Christian aid worker said.

"From conversation with many Somalis, both inside and outside the country, I know many hold opinions diametrically opposed to the sentiments expressed in the newspapers. But dissenting opinions, though frequently voiced, aren't generally printed."

Despite the media saturation of Somalia, few foreign journalists, if any, have noticed the local press. Clan-based factions print most newspapers and many have failed financially in the past year.

While Western reporters aren't interested in local papers, the reverse is true of Somali jour-

ists. In fact one article said American troops were accompanied by "hundreds of CIA spies disguised as journalists."

They think Somalis should die before changing their religion "for one piece of bread or one cup of porridge." And they're ready to punish — with death — Somalis who do convert.

Following are some allegations translated from the Somalia press:

— The only "pure Americans" are Indians. The "not real Americans" are either blacks (who are kept from power and given little freedom) or Jews. All the world's governments are like "Jewish dogs" and do what Jews say.

— America militarily threatens only Muslim countries (Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Syria, Palestine, and Somalia) because it hates Islam.

— President Bill Clinton's first words after being elected were that he would build a church in Jerusalem. Is Clinton not sending Jewish soldiers to Somalia to kill Somalis like Jews kill Palestinians?

— Others (an apparent reference to Christians) "gave the Somali people knives" to kill each other and encouraged the civil war so they have no desire for the civil war to stop.

— Christians want to convert children "to remove the roots of the future of the next generation ... to stop the spread of Islam" throughout Somalia. Church groups have been operating a plan to "snatch children and relocate them abroad since 1950." A Swedish law allows Somali children to be given to Christians without permission of the biological parents.

— "Let these few Somali Christians and these Christian organizations know that we know every step they take and we will take action against them. If God wills, soon we will publish the hidden secrets of those organizations."

# Elder says changes needed to stifle looming SBC crisis

By Toby Druin

NASHVILLE (ABP) — Lloyd Elder, former president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, is asking Southern Baptists to start a "modern-day missionary movement" to rescue the Southern Baptist Convention.

The threat to the SBC, Elder said in a letter May 8, is seen in dangerous statistical trends that will force the SBC to layoff missionaries and close down agencies and institutions, possibly by the year 2000.

Neither the SBC's "controlling majority" nor the "voting minority" can rescue the SBC alone, Elder said. Instead, he called for a "mission-support coalition within the whole Baptist family to stop the critical trends and support missions as we know it."

Elder asks that grassroots Southern Baptists — "not a new political party" — mandate that the 14-year denominational controversy be stopped through sweeping constitutional and bylaw changes that "would involve the whole family in missionary governance, and call on our people to renew their zeal in missions support."

The proposals would force the SBC's ruling conservatives to share power with state conventions and dissident moderate Baptists.

Elder's proposals would have the president and the first vice president be elected for two years and alternate between laypersons and ordained ministers; involve state conventions in the nomination of half the persons to serve on SBC boards, commissions, and committees; change how messengers qualify for the SBC annual meeting; increase the maximum number of messengers from a church from 10 to 20; and have the convention be held every two years and include simultaneous regional conventions through television hookups.

His proposals are in a research report entitled "Calling the Family Back Together" which was mailed last week to 6,300 persons — "representative missions leaders in the churches, associations, state conventions and SBC" and to state paper editors, Baptist Press, Associated Baptist Press, Baptists Today, and secular religion editors and writers.

Morris Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, declined to discuss Elder's research and proposal. "I have no response," he told Associated Baptist Press.

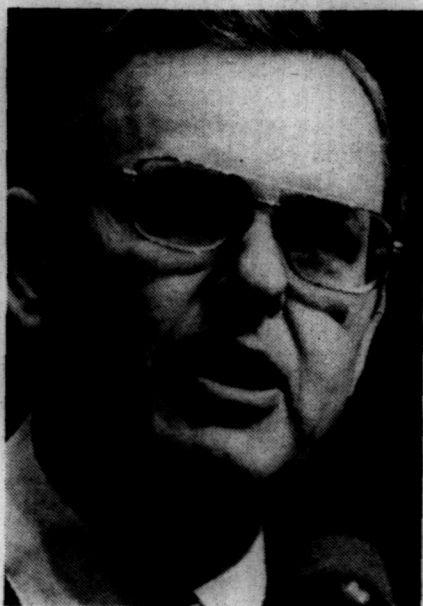
Elder, who was forced to retire in August 1991 after seven years as president of the Sunday School Board, said he had paid the \$7,300 cost of research, editing, printing of 8,000 copies, and distribution of the report. If others want to help with mass distribution, he said, copies can be obtained in lots of 25 for \$20.

The report and action plans grew out of his concern for the future of the denomination, he said in the

cover letter.

His work does not relate to his former role as president of the Sunday School Board, he contends. In his retirement agreement, Elder became an advisor and consultant to the board at full salary (\$135,888) and benefits for a year, which ended April 1. After that he receives half salary and full benefits, plus an automobile.

Under the agreement, however, Elder risks losing all compensation



Lloyd Elder

if he makes any statement or takes any action "not in the best interest" of the Sunday School Board. But Elder said the report is not about him or the Sunday School Board.

"Only a movement of grassroots, mission-supporting Southern Baptist people and a miracle from the Lord will change the course of our denomination," he said. "Leadership from the state conventions could be absolutely essential, but a new political party would only further divide us."

In the past 14 years, while SBC conservatives have gained control of the denomination and its agencies through a series of narrow elections, the numerical growth and financial contributions of

Southern Baptists have fallen off, according to statistics cited by Elder.

"Either the Southern Baptist Convention has become what the people want but are not willing to support financially, or, the Southern Baptist Convention can be changed by the people into what they do want and will, in fact, support."

Elder's report is in two parts. The first on "Critical Trends" analyzes what has happened in the denomination since 1980, the year following the beginning of the controversy, and projects trends through 2000.

The second part Elder calls "My SBC Vision for a Family in Crisis Toward 2000 A.D." and concludes with 20 "action plans."

His analyses include results of SBC presidential elections, trends in membership growth, total baptisms, church gifts to all causes, church budget gifts, mission gifts, Cooperative Program gifts, and other areas.

One chart details the giving examples of churches of persons serving on the SBC Executive Committee and on the mission boards, the Sunday School Board, the WMU Executive Board, the Coordinating Council of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, and those who have served the last 14 years as SBC president.

Elder's research suggests leaders of the Fellowship are more supportive of the SBC Cooperative Program than are recent SBC presidents or members of the SBC Executive Committee, which controls the Cooperative Program budget.

The churches represented by the members of the CBF's coordinating council gave a higher percentage of church income to the Cooperative Program in 1991 (7.21%) than the churches represented by the members of the Executive Committee (6.84%) or the last seven SBC presidents (4.45%).

Druin is associate editor of Texas Baptist Standard.

## Father-pastors remembered with Carey scholarship

Growing up in Petal, Gary Fordham and David Thompson have led parallel lives that often intersected. Both were influenced by their fathers who were pastors. W. A. Fordham (WCC 1956) recently retired as pastor of First Church, Petal. The late O. E. Thompson, who studied at William Carey College in the 1960's, served Petal-Harvey Church from 1961-70.

In honor of their fathers the two sons have established the Fordham-Thompson Scholarship Fund at William Carey College with an endowment of \$5,000. Earnings from the endowment will provide an annual scholarship which will be awarded to a church-related vocation student who is preparing for the pastoral/preaching ministry.

Gary Fordham and David Thompson are co-owners of AAA Mobile Homes with agencies in Hattiesburg, Pearl, and Biloxi, and Slidell, La. Fordham is a member of First Church, Petal, and he is also a member of the Board of Ministerial Education of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Thompson is a member of First Church, Brandon.



# Youth enjoy competition of 1993 Bible drill season; scholarship won as awards number in the hundreds

By Robin D. Nichols

"It was good and it's over" was the sentiment of thousands of Mississippians at the conclusion of the 1993 Bible Drills.

Approximately 2,650 children and youth participated in Bible Drills this year. Thousands of family members, drill leaders, church friends, and relatives heard Bible verses repeated for weeks during the winter and spring.

Many children and youth began memory work and Bible skill preparation in September of 1992. They learned Scripture, how to use the Bible, and began to store its truth in their hearts.

It is estimated that another 100 children and young people participated in church and associational drills. The total participation for 1993 is more than previous years.

The 1993 Selection Tournament took place May 1 at Alta Woods Church in Jackson.

Sixty young people qualified by memorizing Scripture and using their skills in finding Bible verses quickly. The young people represent over 900 young people who participated in Bible Drills.

Mississippi received a plaque in 1992 for having the most young people to participate in Bible Drill of the Southern Baptist state conventions.

The purpose of the Selection Tournament is to select two young people to represent Mississippi Baptists at Ridgecrest and Glorieta Conference Centers this summer.

Wendy Dunn, First Church, Hattiesburg, and Rebekah Young, Hope Church, Philadelphia, were

the respective winners for Ridgecrest and Glorieta.

The other finalists in the youth Selection Tournament were Stephanie Hanberry (alternate), Oral Church, Sumrall; Scott Wallace, Rocky Creek Church, Lucedale; Laura Wolfe, Woodlawn Church, Vicksburg; Brit Simon, Calvary Church, Braxton; Blake Everett, Harpersville Church, Forest; Shelia Busby, Chester Church, Ackerman.

These young people will meet again for fun in the sun at Gulfshore Assembly on August 5-7, during the Discipleship Training Leadership Conference. At Gulfshore these young people will participate in a demonstration drill.

The Discipleship and Family Ministry Department also awarded 61 plaques to nine-year participants. These nine-year participants are young people who have been a part of Bible Drill from grades four through twelve.

A Nine-Year Scholarship Drill was also held on May 1 at Alta Woods. Joshua Winscott, Prentiss Church, Prentiss, was the winner. He is the son of Rev. and Mrs. Jack Winscott, pastor of Prentiss Church.

Joshua will attend Mississippi College in the fall.

Mississippi registered another first by having two brothers win the Nine-Year Scholarship Drill. John, Joshua's older brother, won in 1990 and also attended Mississippi College.

Six-year trophies were awarded to 100 young people; five-year trophies

were awarded to 125 young people; and four-year trophies were awarded to 225 young people.

Approximately 50 eight-year certificates were awarded to young people.

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board depends on 300 adults who serve as callers, judges, and time keepers during the 12 State Bible Drill finals.

This number does not include the people who work as judges in churches and associations during drills in preparation for the State Drill.

Chad Smith, Oral Church, Lamar Association, was the winner of the 1993 Youth Speakers Tournament.

Chad will represent Mississippi at Ridgecrest during the Discipleship and Family Ministry Leadership Conference, July 17-23.

The other two finalists were Renee Wilson, Rocky Creek Church, Lucedale; and Thomas Ellington, Oral Church, Sumrall.

Wilson and Ellington will give their speeches at Gulfshore at the Discipleship and Family Ministry Conference, August 5-7.

Bible Drill and Speakers Tournament leaflets are available from the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Nichols is the former consultant for youth and recreation in the Discipleship Training Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. He is now adult and family ministry consultant in that department.



1993 Bible Drill winners include Joshua Winscott (left photo, at left) being presented the scholarship award by Robin Nichols. Youth Speakers Tournament winners were (top photo, from left) Thomas D. Ellington, third place; Renee Wilson, second place; and Chad Smith, winner. Youth Selection Tournament winners were (middle photo, from left) Rebekah Young, Wendy Dunn, and alternate Stephanie Hanberry. Nichols is also pictured at right in the photo.

## Missouri pastor uses Mother's Day visit to drive home messages to congressman

By Art Toalston & Jim Day

ARNOLD, Mo. (BP)—In a Mother's Day visit to church, Richard Gephardt, U.S. House of Representatives majority leader, received some 10 minutes of a Missouri pastor's heart against abortion and special homosexual rights and for God in government.

The comments by Gerald Davidson, pastor of First Church in Arnold, Mo., and the Missouri Baptist Convention's immediate past president, to Gephardt, a visitor in the congregation May 9 with his mother, Loreen, were replayed over Christian radio KSIV in St. Louis May 14. Davidson was a talk show guest on the station the previous day.

Davidson said Gephardt told him after the worship service he was not offended by the comments, which sparked three standing ovations from the congregation and various other interruptions of applause.

First turning to the abortion issue, Davidson said, "I would

say to you, and I say it very kindly because you are our special guest, we at First Baptist Arnold are pro-life."

The congregation responded with its first standing ovation, and Davidson resumed by describing "genocide...against the unborn infant" as "one of the greatest blights on American society today."

Turning to homosexual rights, Davidson said, "We stand for the human rights of all people regardless of their race, color or creed. However, we stand strongly opposed to the lesbian, gay, and homosexual movement."

Again the church congregation responded with a standing ovation.

On a third issue, Davidson stated, "I know that Baptists have long stood for separation of church and state...But I do not believe that we need to separate our government from God and from godly principles."

After more applause, the pastor

said in a visit to Moscow last year he heard a former Soviet official say, "Our way has failed. Come and give us God. We need God in our schools, we need God in our government."

Davidson concluded: "Dear congressman, I would plead with you and I would plead with all of our political leaders who have a sense of godliness about them that they do what they can to help point our nation back to God, and we assure you that we will be praying with you and for you as you endeavor to do that."

The congregation responded with another standing ovation.

"I did realize it was Mother's Day," Davidson said when asked about the appropriateness of such comments that day.

"But what better day would there be than Mother's Day...to address the matter of abortion?"

Day is publisher and executive editor of MetroVoice. Toalston writes for Baptist Press.

## Anniversary celebration set to honor MBC president, wife as they reach fiftieth milestone

The children of W.W. and Eletha Walley request the pleasure of your company at a reception honoring the 50th wedding anniversary of their parents on Sunday, June 6, 1993.

The reception will be held in the fellowship hall of First Church, Waynesboro, from 2-4 p.m.

Your friendship is a cherished gift; we respectfully request no other.

W.W. Walley, longtime Waynesboro physician, is presently serving a second term as president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.



Eletha and W.W. Walley



# Letters to the editor

## Purpose of WMU petition questioned

Editor:

I recently received a letter from our associational director of missions requesting that I forward a copy of a letter from Earl Kelly to our church. Earl Kelly's letter requested that we as a church affirm our support for WMU. However, I believe this petition will be used at the SBC in Houston in order to "prove" that Mississippi Baptists affirm WMU's new role as a missions organization which supports any and all mission efforts that they deem prudent, regardless of who these mission efforts are sponsored by.

We at Bethel do support the historic WMU. But we do not necessarily support it being anything other than an auxiliary of the SBC. Bro. Kelly, if you are asking us to support the WMU as they venture off into uncharted waters, I believe this purpose should be more clearly stated in the petition.

Thomas A. Johnson, Pastor  
Bethel, Church, Water Valley

## False teachings of Masonry

Editor:

The Bible teaches that all men are creatures of God, but all men are not the children of God. Therefore, God is the God of all men,

but the Father of only saved men.

Masonry denies the sinful nature of man and believes in a world brotherhood. Masonry sees itself as a "World Fraternity." Masonry teaches that all men are spiritual brothers because they share the same universal Father, the God of Masonry. Masonry rejects the Christian teaching that God is the true spiritual Father only of those who accept his Son, Jesus Christ (John 1:12).

Masonry teaches that all non-Masons are living in spiritual darkness and that only the Lodge leads men to spiritual light. In the First Degree of Masonry, the candidate is told he "has long been in darkness, and now seeks to be brought to light."

Masonry denies and opposes the biblical teaching of "salvation by grace alone" (Eph. 2:8-9) and replaces it with a teaching that stresses salvation by good deeds and self-improvement. Man's pride causes him to try to earn salvation by his good deeds and by his self-improvement instead of spiritual regeneration by grace.

Men in the Lodge do not realize that when they identify themselves with the names of God or activities only God can do, they are committing blasphemy. For instance, in Rev. 5:1-5 only Jesus is permitted to open the "seven seals." But in the 17th Degree of the Scottish Rite, the "ALL-Puissant" opens the seven seals in the Masonic ritual.

One of the most dismaying statements found in the ritual is where Masonry claims that Jehovah God created Masonry. Each candidate is taught this in the 30th Degree of the Scottish Rite.

The deception of Blue Lodge Masons (beginners) is why the majority of Masons are ignorant of what real Masonry constitutes and represents.

I have pointed out some of the many false teachings of the Lodge as a corporate body. I have not condemned individual Christian or individual non-Christian members of the Lodge.

Bennett Blanton  
Houston, Miss.

## Symbolism used in the Masonic lodge

Editor:

Since the true meaning of Masonic symbols (and thus, the true meaning of masonry itself) is to be known only by the Prince Adepts of Masonry, we must hear what they say. They (Albert Pike, Albert Mackey, J. D. Buck, Daniel Sickles, and other masons) teach us that masonry is but a revival of the Ancient Mysteries (the mystery religions of Babylon, Egypt, Persia, Rome, and Greece).

First the "square and the compass" is said to be a reminder for the mason to conduct himself in an honest way in dealings with brother masons. "The real meaning however is sexual. The square represents the female (passive) generative principle, the earth, and the baser sensual nature; and the compass represents the male (active) generative principle, and sun/heavens, and the higher, spiritual nature. The compass, arranged above the Square, symbolizes the (male) Sun, impregnating the passive (female) Earth with its life

producing rays. The true meanings, then, are two-fold: the earthly (human) representations are of the man and his phallus, and the woman and her receptive eteis. The cosmic meaning is that of the active Sun (deity, the sun god) from above, imparting life into the passive Earth (deity, the earth/fertility goddess) below and producing life."

The letter "G" appears inside the compass and square and on the east wall of the temple over the chair of the Worshipful Master. The Blue Lodge member is first told the "G" is representative of God, then of deity, and later of geometry. But in reality it represents the "generative principle" as discussed above. In its position it is thus a symbol of the Sun-god, Osiris, who has been worshipped for hundreds of years by pagans while facing the east.

How it must shatter the heart of God to see these pagan and satanic symbols laying on the altar alongside his Holy Bible in Masonic lodges around the world to promote a way of salvation contrary to his perfect provision of Jesus Christ!

Mollie H. Miller  
Grenada

## U.S. Senator affirms Masonry

Editor:

I have reached the firm conclusion, both as a Southern Baptist and as a 33rd Degree Scottish Rite Mason, that far too much has been made of the wrongheaded, albeit sincere, obsession of a Texas Baptist that prompted him to launch a false and unfair vendetta against Freemasonry.

I do not know Dr. James L. Holly, M.D. of Beaumont, Texas. It is not my purpose to attack either his character or his intelli-

gence. Indeed, I give him the benefit of the doubt; acknowledge that he is probably sincere in his vendetta.

At the same time, I would advise him, and those who may have accepted his unfortunate view, that Dr. Holly is sincerely wrong.

I have been a Southern Baptist since my childhood. I have served two Baptist churches as deacon and Sunday School teacher. I have been a Mason for 45 years. I note that Dr. Holly has been described as a conservative. I too have been so described.

My advice to the 1993 SBC, for whatever it is worth, is that the messengers give Dr. Holly's motion a quick and quiet demise. The Southern Baptist Convention has far more important things to do.

Jesse Helms  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC

## Letters policy

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

All correspondence is subject to editing. Letters must be limited to 250 words.

No more than one letter will be printed during a 3-month period from any individual. Each correspondent must include an address and the name of his or her church.

When in the judgment of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with that subject will be terminated.

In special instances, when to identify the writer of a letter might cause undue embarrassment, the name will be withheld.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks.

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## Baptist papers may see postal increase under compromise approved by House

WASHINGTON (ABP) — State Baptist newspapers probably will face a small rate increase for each of the next six years, beginning in October. But the news could have been worse, according to a major non-profit mail organization.

The House Post Office and Civil Service Committee approved, 17-5, a compromise measure that would phase in higher rates on non-profit mailers over a six-year period. The compromise, drafted by committee chairman William Clay, D-Mo., was drawn after the Clinton administration proposed 150 spending cuts that included funding for preferred postal rates.

The administration wants to save \$152 million over four years by reducing revenue foregone appropriations to the U.S. Postal Service. Revenue foregone, which has been steadily reduced for the past several years, reimburses the Postal Service for the non-profit mailers'

share of overhead expenses. Non-profit rates reflect only the cost of handling that class of mail.

While saving the government money, it would have resulted in a 35% rate hike Oct. 3 for non-profit mailers.

The Clay compromise would mean a 12% increase — about 2% annually for six years — for second-class non-profit publications.

Third-class non-profit publications would face a 23% hike — about 4% each year.

## There's room for GA's, Acteens at summer mini-camps

Space is still available for Girls in Action and Acteens who are interested in attending a summer mini-camp at either Camp Garaywa or Central Hills. Cost for the camps is \$50 per person.

Camp openings at Camp Garaywa include June 2-4 and June 30-July 2, GA mini-camps; and June 28-30, GA and Acteen mini-camp. Openings at Central Hills include June 14-16 and June 16-18, Acteen mini-camps.

Registration requests for Camp Garaywa mini-camps should be sent to Camp Garaywa, P.O. Box 1278, Clinton, MS 39060. Central Hills reservations should be mailed to Woman's Missionary Union, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205.

For additional information, call Jan Cossitt or Helen Price at (601) 968-3800.

At 3 a.m., 165 people lost their house.



## Just for the Record

Mississippi College has been named by the John Templeton Foundation to be among a select few colleges and universities throughout the United States to be included on the 1993 honor roll of character building colleges. The 111 institutions which met the distinctive criteria for the select list were chosen from over 900 candidates nominated exclusively by presidents and development directors of the United States' over 1,450 four-year, accredited colleges and universities.

Mississippi College has made plans for two special workshops in painting this summer. The first summer term will offer the Sam G. Britt Painting Workshop on June 7-18 for undergraduate or graduate credit, while the same workshop will also be

offered for non-credit on June 7-11. The emphasis will be on oil and other medium and classes will run each day from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. The second summer term will feature the Alan Flattmann Painting Workshop on July 13-23 for undergraduate or graduate credit, while non-credit classes will meet July 12-16. Sessions will run from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. and the emphasis will be on oil and pastels.

William Carey College hosted an Appreciation Dinner on May 6 for superintendents of education, principals, and supervising teachers who participated in the student teaching program of the college this year. Jacques Rogers, an English teacher at Collins High School, and the 1992 recipient of the Milken Foundation National Award and

Disney's Teacher of the Year Award, spoke to the group about what is "in" and what is "out" in education today. Al Foy, chairman of the education department, presented each teacher with a certificate of appreciation.

Louisiana Christian Writers' Guild will hold a Christian writers' conference in New Orleans, July 23-24 at New Orleans Seminary. For registration information, contact Don Aycock, P. O. Box 12765, Lake Charles, La., 70612 or phone (318) 855-9414 or 855-6280.

Priest River Southern Baptist Church, a mission church in Priest River, Idaho, is in need of old pews. For more information, call Dave Huffman, pastor, at (208) 448-1717.

Sunflower Baptist Association has passed a resolution to affirm and support the present local, state, and national leadership of the WMU and commend the WMU for its inclusive worldwide vision for today and tomorrow.

Arrowood Church, Meridian, will host the Disciples Quartet and The Steeles on Saturday, June 5, at 7 p.m. Kevin Griffin is pastor and John W. Pace is minister of music.

Wynndale Church, Jackson, will have Krickett Brasher, Sunday night, May 30, as special guest. Brasher, performing artist at the Christian Country Music Awards in Nashville last August, will sing and speak. Charles Gentry is pastor.



Single adult ministry of Main Street Church, Hattiesburg, will present **Family Outings**, a three-act drama, on June 18, 7 p.m., at the Jackie Dole Sherrill Community Center. Cast members for the dinner theater production/pictured clockwise from front, are Jo Fairchild, Cathy Hudson, Stefanie Stommel, Tim Matheny, Tommy White, Lisa Lazenby, and Amy Hurst. Cast members not pictured are Chris Townsend and Jeff Hart. Tickets, \$10 each, are available at the church office, Lighthouse Christian Book Store, or from individual cast members. For more information, call the church office at 544-5444.

## "Jesus" project in Siberia

NOVOSIBIRSK, Siberia (EP) — A team of 60 volunteers from the JESUS Film Project are sharing the gospel in the Siberian city of Novosibirsk, located about 250 miles from Tomsk-7, the scene of the worst nuclear accident in the former Soviet Union since the 1986 Chernobyl reactor explosion.

The team met in Moscow and

traveled on to the Siberian city to hold a convocation for public school teachers, scheduled to begin April 27, according to Jerry Franks, the director of the International School Project. The team will train the educators in a curriculum of morals and ethics based on the biblical teachings of Christianity using the JESUS film as a teaching tool.



Trinity Church, Southaven, held ground breaking for Phase #2 of its building complex. The church was organized in October 1990 from a merger of three congregations, two in Memphis and one in DeSoto County. The average Sunday School attendance started at 250 and now it is 700. The building committee, pictured from left, are Brad Parsley; Elsie Curtis; Matt Waddell; Jim Butler, pastor; Frank Roberts, chairman of the committee; and Perry Thornton. Not pictured are Al Smith and Noel Kelly.



O'Tuckolofa Church, Water Valley, celebrated its 100th anniversary on May 2. Among the activities were a certificate presented by Mississippi Baptist Convention Board; a congratulatory letter from the White House; an unveiling of a painting by Sue Cox of the old church; and Daniel Dickerson, pastor, recognized three current members, two of which have been members for 63 years and the other 62 years. Pictured is Marvin Bibb, former pastor, delivering the sermon during the celebration. There were 150 people in attendance.

## BACKYARD BIBLE CLUB/ MISSION VBS WORKSHOPS

Saturday, June 5, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

First Baptist, Olive Branch  
Leaders



Lily Culp



Debi Smith



Cindy Sansing



Linda Reeves

The workshop is designed to train local church faculties to plan and conduct projects using the Backyard Bible Club/Mission VBS curriculum. The workshop is free. Participants should bring a sack lunch. Coffee and tea will be furnished.

For more information, call Larry Salter, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Sunday School Department, (601) 968-3800.



# Homecomings

**Goodhope, Richton:** May 30; Billy Murphy, guest speaker; afternoon singing with local groups; Harold Walker, pastor.

**Friendship, Brookhaven:** May 30; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner on grounds, noon, and afternoon service; James Alford Case, pastor, Eddiceton Church (Franklin), guest speaker; Wiley Reid, pastor.

**County Line, Crystal Springs:** May 30; Bible study, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; noon meal served in fellowship hall; Cemetery Association, 1 p.m.; Soldiers Again from Daniel Memorial, Jackson, will sing at 2 p.m.; softball game, 3 p.m.; Bob Brennan, Riverdale, Ga., guest speaker and will talk on missions at 5:30 p.m.

**Duffee, Duffee:** May 30; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; lunch in fellowship hall, noon; James Stephens, guest speaker; The Broken Vessels, Morton, will sing at 1:30 p.m.; John West, pastor.

**Ephesus, Forest:** May 30; services, 11 a.m.; Jimmy McDill, guest speaker; lunch served and afternoon singing.

**Antioch (Simpson):** May 30;

Barry Ward, former pastor, guest speaker; dinner on grounds and singing in afternoon; George L. Lewis, pastor; Dusty Rhodes, music director.

**Roundaway, Doddsville:** May 30; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship 11 a.m.; dinner on grounds, 12:15 p.m.; service, 1:15 p.m.; Gayden Harrell, pastor, Star, speaker.

**Emmanuel, Ocean Springs:** May 30; 40th anniversary; special Sunday School class, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; Bill Cummings, first pastor, guest speaker; dinner on grounds, 12:15-1:30 p.m.; service, 2 p.m.; Bob Storie and James Hayes, former pastors, featured speakers; Sanford Sherman, pastor.

**Heucks Retreat (Lincoln):** May 30; 90th anniversary; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner on grounds; gospel singing in afternoon; Robert L. (Bobby) Smith, pastor, New Zion (Lawrence), guest speaker; John McCall, interim pastor.

**Smyrna, Hazlehurst:** May 30; service, 11 a.m.; Larry Hendricks, Little Rock, Ark., guest speaker; dinner on grounds, noon; Curtis Alston, guest singer; Thomas Littlejohn, pastor.

**Johnson Creek (Greene):** May 30; service, 11 a.m.; Rick Boose, Petal, guest speaker; dinner in fellowship hall, 12:15 p.m.; afternoon singing, The Southern Harmony, guest singers.

**Hollandale (Washington):** May 30; services, 10:30 a.m.; Vernon May, former pastor, guest speaker; dinner on grounds, noon; 1 p.m., singing; Greg Williams, pastor.

**Terry Road:** May 30; fifth anniversary service; Sheriff Doc Bradford, speaker; Pearl Quartet, music; dinner at noon hour. Henry Bennett, pastor.

**Mt. Olive, Coila:** May 30; 10:30 a.m.; William "Bud" Daves, Lexington, guest speaker; covered dish in fellowship hall at 12:30 p.m.; Larry Edwards, pastor.

**Arlington, Bogue Chitto:** May 30; Clarence Young, former pastor, guest speaker for 11 a.m. worship service; lunch at noon; singing at 1:30 p.m.; David Waits, pastor.

**Galilee (Copiah):** May 30; 11 a.m. service; noon meal; John Meadows, Clinton, guest speaker; Leroy Stuart and Michelle Barlow, music; Scott Worley, interim pastor.



## New mission launched

Jimmy Anderson (left), president of the Native American Southern Baptist Fellowship, gets acquainted with a resident of a Garifuna Indian village in Honduras. Anderson, a Creek, visited the area to learn how the fellowship can work with indigenous people in the region to communicate the gospel. The fellowship is cooperating with the Foreign Mission Board on the mission project. (BP photo by Stanley Stamps)

## Revival Dates

**Bethlehem, Benton:** May 30-June 2; Sunday, 11 a.m.; Sunday, 7 p.m.; Mike Bridges, pastor, Black Jack, Vaughn, evangelist; Carol Montgomery, music; John Schoolar, pastor.

**Enon, Grenada:** May 30-June 4; Sunday, 6 p.m.; weeknights, 7 p.m.; Keith Powell, Hebron, Grenada, evangelist; Barry Worrell, Emmanuel, Grenada, music; May 29, cookout and singing sponsored by the Deacon Family Ministry; Tommy Miller, pastor.

**Smyrna, Hazlehurst:** May 30-June 2; 7 p.m. nightly; Larry Hendricks, Little Rock, Ark., foreign missionary on furlough, evangelist; Curtis Alston, music; Thomas Littlejohn, pastor.

**Johnson Creek (Greene):** May 31-June 4; 7 p.m. nightly; Rick Boose, associate pastor, Lynn Ray Road, Petal, evangelist; Von-

cile Brewer, Johnson Creek, music.

**Sapa (Webster):** May 30-June 4; 7 p.m. nightly; Allen Simpson, evangelist; Greg Reed, music evangelist. Tim Roaten, pastor.

**Midway, Jackson:** May 30-June 2; 7 p.m.; Michael Gott, Jacksonville, Texas, evangelist; Tom Larrimore, music; David Wilkinson, pastor.

## Thomas Brown, Benndale pastor, dies May 23

Thomas Brown, 61, pastor of First Church, Benndale (George County), for 15 years, died May 23. Services were held May 26 at Benndale Church.

He is survived by his wife, Kathy; two daughters, Katrina Byrd and Pamela Olsen; one adopted son, Tommy Erhart; his mother, Rena Brown; and five grandchildren.

## Sherrell Lofton, former minister, dies in Jackson

Sherrell Monroe Lofton, 65, of Smithdale, died May 21 at the V.A. Hospital in Jackson. He was a retired minister and had pastored churches in Louisiana and Mississippi. Funeral services were held May 23 at Ramah Church, Franklin Association. He is survived by his wife, Mazie S. Lofton; three daughters, Rebecca Wilson, McCall Creek, and Sandra Blair and Tina Steele, of Bude; two brothers; and four sisters.

## Across the country . . .

## "Celebrating Sex in Marriage" theme for 1993 BSSB marriage conferences

NASHVILLE — "Celebrating Sex in Your Marriage" is the 1993 theme for autumn marriage conferences sponsored by the Baptist Sunday School Board.

"This autumn, Fall Festival of

Marriage celebrates 15 seasons of marriage enrichment weekends," said David Huebner, coordinator of the event for the board's discipleship and family adult department.

The conferences run from Friday

evening until Sunday afternoon and are designed to help a husband and wife grow in their relationship.

Some of the topics to be addressed at the Fall Festival of Marriage conferences include: sexuality, spiritual oneness, building an affair-proof marriage, romance in the relationship, forgiveness, finances, and understanding the differences between men and women.

Conferences will be held in New Orleans, on Sept. 17-19; Palm Coast, Fla., on Sept. 24-26; Louisville, Ky., on Sept. 24-26; Dallas, Texas, on Oct. 8-10; Mesa, Ariz., on Oct. 8-10; Corpus Christi, Texas, on Oct. 15-17; and Sacramento, Calif., on Oct. 22-24.

Conferences will also be held in Shocco Springs, Ala., on Oct. 22-24; Ocean City, Md., on Oct. 29-31; Osage Beach, Mo., on Nov. 5-7; San Antonio, Texas, on Sept. 17-19 and Nov. 5-7.

Two Baptist assemblies will host multiple conferences dates: Glorieta (N.M.) Conference Center on Oct. 1-3 and 15-17; and Ridgecrest (N.C.) Conference Center, Oct. 1-3, 8-10, 15-17, 22-24, 29-31, and Nov. 5-7.

For more information, call or write the Baptist Sunday School Board, MSN 151, 127 Ninth Avenue, North, Nashville, TN, 37234, (615) 251-2282.

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**THE COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH** in Columbus, Miss., is presently looking for a part time minister of music and youth. Any individual who is interested should mail a resume to: Community Baptist Church, Search Committee Chairman, 2490 Yorkville Road East, Columbus, MS 39702 or they may call 327-5306 or 328-2105.

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**CALVARY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**, Meridian, Miss., is accepting applicants for the position of school principal. Interested parties should send a resume to Calvary Baptist Church, P.O. Box 4097, Meridian, MS 39304.

**WANTED:** Part-time church secretary. Castlewoods Baptist Church, Brandon, (601) 992-9977.

**FOR SALE:** Antique box pump organ for \$100. Phone (601) 992-9721.



# Lebanese Baptists struggling in economy shattered by civil war

LARNACA, Cyprus (BP)—A 16-year civil war ended in Lebanon in 1990 but as Lebanese Baptists celebrate their 100th anniversary this year another war rages.

"We have a new kind of war — an economic war," said Nabih Haddad, general secretary of the Lebanese Baptist Convention and pastor of Beirut's Ain Dara Baptist Church.

Runaway inflation has reduced the currency to almost nothing, and Baptists who have fled the country have reduced Lebanese Baptists' base of support.

More than two years after the return of peace, Baptist churches still struggle to repair shell-damaged buildings, such as Haddad's church.

Hanna E. Fahmi, pastor of Rahbe Baptist Church in Rahbe, a town in north Lebanon, tells a similar story.

Artillery shelling damaged the church building and made it totally unusable for several years.

Also, Muslims from a nearby town attacked Rahbe during the war, partially burning the church and its furnishings. Fahmi was beaten during the attack and most of his theological books were burned.

Thousands of Lebanese citizens, including many Baptists, fled during the war.

About 1,000 Baptists in 25 churches and missions belong to the Lebanese Baptist Convention, plus six independent Baptist congregations.

Haddad said the entire Baptist community, including children and steady visitors, probably numbers about 5,000.

Some Christians hoped the war's end would make the Lebanese people more responsive to the gospel.

But Haddad said that hasn't happened. Evangelism continues to be hard work with no signs of large revivals.

"Really, Satan is the same in any situation," he said. "In the world there are many reasons to prevent people from coming to the Lord."

Despite problems, churches continue to grow, have evangelistic campaigns, and pass out Bibles, Haddad said.

Southern Baptists, who had missionaries in Lebanon for 39 years until the U.S. government banned the presence of Americans in 1987, are playing a key role in helping Lebanese Baptists rebuild and carry on.

In 1992 the Foreign Mission Board contributed \$135,000 in

relief funds to Lebanon, said Dale Thorne, the board's director for Middle East work.

That amount included \$82,100 in hunger funds and \$52,900 in general relief. All but \$2,900 of the general relief funds went to church repair.

The board also contributed \$1,200 for women's work, \$2,000 for new work, \$6,000 in church aid, \$9,000 to help the Lebanese Baptist Convention, and \$12,000 in student scholarships, Thorne said.

"A number of the pastors also receive salaries as employees of the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary and the international (Baptist) institutions that operate in Lebanon," he added.

## Lebanon



## Eager Mongolians

Evelyn Harthcock (right) and her husband, Gary (second from right), volunteers for Southern Baptists' Cooperative Services International program, have found Mongolian young people especially eager to learn the English language. Shortly after they arrived in that country, they started English lessons in their home, where Batmuun (left) and Batchuluun (second from left) practice their conversational skills. (BP photo by Charles Ledford)

# Miracle recovery from devastating stroke allows pastor to remain active at age 80

By Teresa Dickens

If someone had told L. Gordon and Polly Sansing in May 1973 that in 20 years they would still be active in ministry, they would have found it hard to believe.

Only weeks earlier, Sansing, 59, had suffered a stroke from which his doctor said he probably would not recover. If he did survive, the family was told, the paralysis in his left side and throat meant, among other things, that he would not be able to speak clearly. So, his doctor concluded, it would be best that he resign as pastor of First Church, Grenada, and retire from pastoring.

*Retire from pastoring!* No doubt that thought brought as much grief to the Sansing family as did his condition. Pastoring had been his life.

Sansing accepted his first pastorate (Madden Church, Leake County) not long after his 20th birthday—May 17, 1933. Because most churches were "quarter-time"—preaching services held once a month, Sansing served four to six churches concurrently as pastor during his first few years in ministry.

His first "half-time" church (preaching twice a month) was New Ireland Church near Union, and during the early '40s, he led Brandon Church (First, Brandon) to go full-time, making it his first full-time pastorate.

While keeping up with his pastoral duties, he also was a student, earning degrees from Clarke College, Newton; Mississippi College, Clinton; and New Orleans Seminary. He and Polly, whom he married May 21, 1934, started a family: Gordon Harold, now pastor of First Church, Vicksburg, was born in 1942.

In 1946, the Sansing family moved to Booneville, where he served until 1949 as pastor of First Church.

Shortly after arriving, their family grew by two when twin boys,

Tim and Tom, were born Aug. 24, 1946.

The family returned to central Mississippi in 1949 to assume the pastorate of Davis Memorial Church (Crestwood Church), Jackson. While in Jackson, he also served as pastor of Broadmoor Church, 1952-57, and as an employee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, 1958-69, working in missions, stewardship,



Polly and L. Gordon Sansing

and evangelism.

While serving as interim pastor for First, Grenada, in 1969, the church asked him to consider becoming their pastor. After much prayer and consideration, he accepted the church's call.

His return to the pastorate went well. The church grew and responded to his leadership. As in any pastorate, there were stresses, but nothing he had not experienced before. He felt good and had no symptoms of health problems.

In Dec. 23, 1972, tragedy struck the Sansing family. Their son Tim, 25, who had been married only three months, died from injuries he received in a construction site accident.

The combination of Tim's untimely death and the stress of the pastorate is what the doctor

believed led the Sansing family to their second crossroads in March 1973. With no warning, the family patriarch's life was threatened both literally and figuratively.

Following his doctor's advice, Sansing resigned as pastor of the Grenada church, and in April he and Polly relocated to Meridian, near their hometown of Union.

What has unfolded in the 20 years since their move to Meridian is nothing less than a miracle. Within weeks, Sansing's speech began to clear up and grow stronger. Like his voice, his physical strength began to return. After only seven months of convalescence, he was asked to teach his Sunday School class at First, Meridian; then to supply for his pastor; and then to accept an interim at New Hope Church, Meridian.

But that was only the beginning. During the past 20 years, Sansing, now 80, has held 24 interim pastorates and four pastorates. He currently serves full-time as pastor for Goodwater Church, near Meridian; staff consultant for Westwood Church, Meridian; and quarter-time as pastor for Kewanee Church, near Toombsville.

"Retirement has been my most rewarding years of ministry," Sansing said with a smile. "In fact, we've had a good time during all of our ministry. I enjoy trying to preach, and I especially enjoyed my years in denominational work. That was a tremendous ministry."

"Making so many friends and leading people to a faith in Christ has brought our greatest joys," added Mrs. Sansing. "I've had a good life as a pastor's wife. I've done everything in the church except serve as WMU president."

"The Lord has blessed us," Sansing concluded. "The call to be a pastor is a special calling of God. I didn't choose it. It is God's business. We'll do the best we can to do what he wants us to do."

## Quotes worth quoting

"I disagree that churches shoot their wounded. There are some mean-spirited individuals who have not yet become persons who rejoice when the pastor is in trouble. But the majority of members want to help." — Camen Conner, retired Albuquerque, N.M., pastor, in the Baptist Program.

"For me, divorce has not been an option. And because it has happened, some people think it'll be easier to just jump into another relationship and think, 'Well, if it doesn't work out, I'll just get a divorce.' They could not be more wrong about that. Anybody who has ever gone through a divorce knows you don't ever want it to become an option again. Ever. Because it is painful, and most people say it takes two to five years to heal from it, because it feels like a death." — Sandi Patti, in CCM magazine, quoted by Evangelical Press news service.

"What has happened to mainline theological education? Physicians could not be so reckless, or they would be slapped with medical malpractice suits. Well, maybe it is time for theological malpractice suits. Smile, if you must, but those coming to worship in our churches deserve faithful preaching, consistent with the biblical and apostolic tradition. What some are getting hardly resembles orthodoxy." — James V. Heidinger, editor of Good News, quoted by Christianity Today.

"We get our parents when they are so old that it is impossible to change their habits." — school essay by an unknown 4th grader.

"Making wise moral decisions is not always so simple as saying, 'What does the Bible say about it?'...The process of discovering the best course of action often involves careful thought, discussion, prayer, Scripture, common sense, and the insight of wiser Christians of the past and present." — John and Susan Yates, *What Really Matters at Home*, Word Publishers.



## Uniform Experiencing the Spirit



By Chuck Pourciau  
John 14:15-27

The Holy Spirit is the most misunderstood and possibly the least respected member of the Trinity. For many, he is a step below the Father and the Son. This lower view of the Holy Spirit goes against both the Bible and Christian experience. Just how vital is the Holy Spirit to the life of the Christian? Let's examine the words of Jesus in John 14.

**The Holy Spirit is a gift from the Father (vv. 15-17).** The Holy Spirit is a gift received by the Christian at the moment of his conversion experience, and God is the source of that gift. In essence, he is both the gift and the giver.

The Holy Spirit is a marvelous gift of God for all Christians, not just the super spiritual elite. Also, he does not come and go. In the words of Jesus, he is "with you forever." Finally, do not expect the Christian ethic to make sense to one who has not been saved. Jesus said that the world cannot accept him or understand him. The reason the Christian understands and believes in the Holy Spirit is because the Spirit "lives with you and will be with you" (v. 17). For me, the greatest evidence of the existence of God is the conviction of the Holy Spirit. I feel it through songs, prayers, sermons, nature, and many other ways. Only God could be the source of such conviction.

**The Holy Spirit is the very presence of Jesus himself (vv. 18-20).** The fact that Jesus was going to the Father was a great concern for the followers of Jesus, but he promised them that he would come to them again, and that would be in the person of the Holy Spirit. At the end of verse 20 Jesus said, "I am in you." In verse 17 he had said that the Holy Spirit lives "in you." Therefore, he and the Spirit are one and the same.

We must be careful about differentiating between the Holy Spirit and Jesus. In the form of the Spirit, Jesus is able to be in all believers in all places at all times. What power that puts at the disposal of the church!

**Obedience is the evidence of the Holy Spirit (vv. 21-24).** The evidence of the Holy Spirit is obedience to the commands of the Lord. It could not be put more clearly nor more beautifully than it was in v. 23. He who loves Jesus will obey his teaching. Also, he will be loved by the Father and Jesus said, "...We will come to him and make our home with him."

Two outstanding truths stand out in these verses. First, evidence of the Holy Spirit is obedience to the teachings of the Lord. Other things such as speaking in tongues have been put forth as proof of the Holy Spirit, but Jesus mentioned none of that. According to Jesus, the only proof of the presence of the Holy Spirit is obedience. Second, Jesus stated that he and the Father come to the obedient Christian and make their home with him. The church building is not the Lord's house. I am. Finally, while he makes his home in us he prepares our home in glory. What a fabulous God we serve!

**The Holy Spirit teaches the believer (vv. 25-26).** Jesus was known as a tremendous teacher who taught with great authority. The disciples would miss his teaching when he went to be with the Father. He told them they did not have to worry about that. The Holy Spirit would both teach them new things and remind them of what he had already taught them.

The Bible and life's experiences can be intimidating. We hunger to learn more of God's Word and desire to live life God's way, but both experiences can be overwhelming. It would be great if we had someone with us to teach us what those difficult passages mean and how to respond in those difficult situations. The Holy Spirit is just that.

**The Holy Spirit gives the believer peace (v. 27).** We need not fear, because Jesus, as the Holy Spirit, grants us peace. It is not peace as the world defines it. The world's definition of peace is absence of conflict. For Jesus, peace is assurance even in conflict. For the unbeliever, peace is determined by external circumstances. For the believer, peace is determined by the internal dwelling of the Holy Spirit. He then can have peace even in the midst of the most terrible storms. Only in Christ is that possible.

How much should the Christian respect the Holy Spirit? Just take a moment and try to imagine life without him.

Pourciau is pastor, First Church, Louisville.

## Bible Book Deliverance from Babylon



By Guy A. Hughes  
Isaiah 44, 45, 46, 48

The great Charles Haddon Spurgeon used to tell this story: "A certain duke once boarded a galley ship. As he passed the crew of slaves, he asked several of them what their offenses were. Almost every man claimed he was innocent. They laid the blame on someone else or accused the judge of yielding to bribery. One young fellow, however, spoke out, 'Sir, I deserve to be here. I stole some money. No one is at fault but myself. I'm guilty.' Upon hearing this, the duke seized him by the shoulder and shouted, 'You scoundrel, you! What are you doing here with all these honest men? Get out of their company at once!' He was then set at liberty while the rest were left to tug at the oars." The key to this prisoner's freedom was the admission of his guilt.

God's people had sinned by following after idols. God's hand of judgment used the Babylonian empire to physically enslave them. They repented of their ways and God forgave. Their spiritual rebirth would soon result in their physical freedom.

**God chooses Cyrus to fulfill his purpose (44:28-45:2a).** Cyrus was a leader of the Medes who God would raise up to conquer the Babylonians and free the Israelites. Cyrus ruled the Medes from 550 B.C. until around 530 B.C. and became Israel's deliverer. Isaiah made this prophecy 150 years before the actual event took place. Some interpreters doubt this miraculous prediction, however, God knows all things and can certainly reveal a name to a prophet. The term "shepherd" is often used to refer to political and religious leaders (2 Sam. 5:2; Jer. 3:15). God gave Israel a deliverer. He has also given us one. He used an earthly king, Cyrus, to physically deliver his people. He gives us a heavenly king, his only Son Jesus, to deliver us spiritually.

**People from all nations called to salvation in God (45:22-25).** God calls upon all of mankind to look to him for salvation. Verse 23 reminds us every knee shall bow before the Lord. Romans 14:11 and Philippians 2:10-11 also declare this fact. Should people refuse to recognize the Savior, they will have no choice one day to recognize him as Lord. All who rage at the Lord shall be ashamed (v. 24).

Too many people refuse to accept the salvation our Lord offers because of their bitterness towards God. By blaming God and refusing to serve him, they side with the very one who has put them in their circumstances from the beginning — Satan. God, in his infinite love, calls us to salvation. Those who clench their fist at God throughout their lives will be humiliated when the Lord Jesus shows them his nail-scarred hand.

**A declaration that God is unique (46:8-10).** The idols which captured the attention of Israel led them into bondage in the first place. Isaiah challenges the people to remember God is unique. There is no other God. It is foolish for us to give our loyalty to anyone or anything which subtracts from our personal relationship with the One who created us. Yet, we do. Too many sacrifice themselves on the altars of modern day idols like sports, television, music, drugs, sex, and on and on the list could go. We choose to do as we please, but Isaiah reminds us God's "purpose will stand and I will do that I please." God will have his way despite our rebellion. No one will ever change the fact that he alone is God.

**A song of praise to God for his redemption (48:20-22).** God did raise up Cyrus to deliver his people. God knew that some would not want to leave Babylon so he issued a command to leave immediately. In the same way some of the people were satisfied in Babylon, some of us become comfortable with our sin, even though we are delivered from it. God commands us to leave sin immediately. And while departing they were to sing praises for their redemption and tell of it to the ends of the earth.

We also have the same commission to spread the good news of the redemption found in Jesus Christ and the responsibility to proclaim this salvation joyfully. Vance Havner put it like this, "When God bids you dip in Jordan, wash in Siloam, or walk a desert trail, the victory lies at the end of the venture. When God says, 'Go!' that is not a suggestion but a command." He is calling us out of something for something. Will we go?

Hughes is pastor, Friendship Church, Grenada.

## Life and Work Breakthrough in the church



By Laura Russell  
Acts 9:15-18, 20, 26-28, 31

No person, apart from Jesus himself, shaped the history of Christianity like the apostle Paul. Even before he was a believer, his actions were significant. His frenzied persecution of Christians after Stephen's death got the church started in obeying Christ's final command to take the gospel worldwide. Paul's personal encounter with Jesus changed his life. He never lost his fierce intensity, but from then on channeled it for spreading the good news.

**God's purpose for Saul (vv. 15-16).** Ananias, a disciple at Damascus, received a vision from the Lord to be the contact man for Paul. Ananias was a "devout man according to the law," and was highly respected by the Jews who lived in Damascus. The Lord revealed to Ananias that Saul was a "chosen instrument" to witness to the Gentile world. Despite his feelings of uneasiness, Ananias obeyed God and ministered to Saul; Saul became Paul, a warrior for Christ. We may never know what God has in store for new converts; however, we must be willing to minister and witness to them just as Ananias did with Saul.

Faith in Christ brings good blessings, but often great suffering, too. Paul would suffer for his faith. God calls us to commitment, not to comfort. He promises to be with us through suffering and hardship, not to spare us from them.

**Ministry of Ananias to Saul (v. 17).** Ananias went to the house where Saul was staying, still wary of his mission. He placed his hands on Saul and called him brother to identify Paul as one of the fellowship. Ananias informed Paul that the Lord Jesus, whom Paul had met on the road, had sent him so that Paul could regain his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Ananias was a great example of Christian love and Christian forgiveness. That is what Christ can do. In Christ, Paul and Ananias, the men who had been bitter enemies, came together as brothers. We must follow Jesus' command (John 13:34) and Ananias' example, showing loving acceptance to other believers.

**Results of Ananias' ministry to Saul (vv. 18, 20).** Although there is no mention of a special filling of the Holy Spirit for Paul, his changed life and subsequent accomplishments bear strong witness of the Holy Spirit's presence and power in his life. Evidently, the Holy Spirit filled Paul when he received his sight and was baptized. Immediately after receiving his sight and being with the believers in Damascus, Paul went to the synagogue to tell the Jews about Jesus Christ. Some Christians counsel new believers to wait until they are thoroughly grounded in the faith before attempting to share the gospel. Although we should not rush into a ministry unprepared, we do not need to wait before telling others what has happened to us. Paul did not wait to witness.

**Ministry of Barnabas to Saul (vv. 26-27).** It is difficult to change your reputation, and Paul had a terrible reputation with the Christians. But Barnabas, a Jewish convert, became the bridge between Paul and the apostles. When everyone else was steering clear of Paul and suspecting him of the worst, Barnabas took him by the hand and stood sponsor for him. New Christians need sponsors, people who will come alongside, encourage, teach, and introduce them to other believers. Find ways you can become a Barnabas to new believers.

**Results of Barnabas' ministry to Paul (v. 28).** Paul now busied himself with a gospel ministry in Jerusalem. In all probability Paul went to the very synagogues where he had once opposed Stephen, to witness to the fact that his life was changed. Paul continued to find and take advantage of opportunities to serve God.

**Growth in the church (v. 31).** In this verse, Luke now makes a summary statement about the affairs of the church. In the period of grace and freedom in the proclamation of the Word, the churches were strengthened and the number of disciples increased.

New Christians need "encouragers" because everyone needs encouragement at one time or another. Whenever Barnabas encouraged Christians, non-Christians flocked to become believers. We are rarely in situations where there isn't someone we can encourage. Are you prepared to be an "encourager" to someone today?

Russell is a member of First Church, Brandon.



# capsules

**BSSB TO OFFER LARGE PRINT EDITION OF ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL QUARTERLY:** NASHVILLE—Beginning in October, the Baptist Sunday School Board will publish a new large print edition of Adult Bible Study, Sunday School lessons from the Life and Work curriculum series. The 8 x 10-inch format will contain lessons on the same Bible passages found in other adult Life and Work curriculum materials, plus photos, art, and maps.

**SBC RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE ASKS TO PREVIEW MESSENGERS' PROPOSALS:** NASHVILLE (BP)—The resolutions committee for the 1993 Southern Baptist Convention has issued a call for preliminary copies of any resolutions messengers intend to introduce during the June 15-17 annual meeting in Houston. Committee chairman James Merritt, pastor of First Church, Snellville, Ga., noted messengers still must formally introduce their proposed resolutions during the convention's business sessions. But the committee welcomes preview copies, Merritt said, adding, "We'll circulate them among the (committee) members in anticipation of our meeting in Houston." During the convention, the resolutions committee will recommend specific resolutions for adoption to messengers at the SBC, which will meet in Houston's George R. Brown Convention Center. Preliminary copies of proposed resolutions may be mailed to Convention Relations, SBC Executive Committee, 901 Commerce St., Suite 750, Nashville, TN 37203.

**RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT:** All Baptists who care about religious liberty must act now. The U.S. House of Representatives unanimously approved the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. This bill, supported by the BJC and Christian Life Commission, will restore the traditional requirement that government demonstrate a "compelling interest" before restricting religious practices. As dramatic and significant as the House vote is, it will be meaningless unless the Senate passes the bill. Please contact your Senators today. Urge them to vote for S. 578. Urge them to oppose any weakening amendments. You may call the U.S. Senate at (202) 224-3121. Some tips on writing your senator: 1) keep the letter to one page, 2) cite the bill number and state your purpose clearly in the first paragraph, 3) make your name and return address legible. The suggested address style is:

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510  
Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_,

Act today to ensure religious liberty for all Americans tomorrow. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact the Baptist Joint Committee at (202) 544-4226.

**CO-FOUNDER OF ZONDERVAN DIES:** GRAND RAPIDS, Mich.—P. J. "Pat" Zondervan, co-founder of Zondervan, the international Christian communications company, died May 6 in Boca Raton, Fla. He was 84. The religious publishing and retailing company that he began with his brother Bernard in 1931 is now a division of HarperCollins Publishing and is one of the largest English-language religious publishing concerns in the world.

**GRADUATION PRAYER THREATENED:** RICHMOND, Va.—Civil liberties activists have warned school officials in Loudoun County that they will face a lawsuit if they permit prayer at high school graduations. The school board recently passed a resolution citing the community's "deeply held religious beliefs" and encouraging student-led prayer.

## Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx  
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UPT UB ZO MA, JCOUNR, BUZEPM, KRO SEPMTAL  
AW ROUHOP EB UK RUPT.

LUKKROY KOP: BOHOP

\*Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke Four: Four.

# Baptists who witnessed, studied Holocaust stunned at ignorance

By Ken Camp

DALLAS (BP) — Five decades after Nazi Germany's extermination of 6 million Jews, a survey has revealed one in five American adults is unconvinced the Holocaust occurred — a belief variously labeled "callous indifference," "inexcusable ignorance" or "just plain mean" by Baptist scholars.

And for World War II veterans such as Baptist layman Junius Kendrick, Holocaust denial is a rejection of the nightmarish reality they witnessed firsthand.

A recent survey of 992 American adults and 506 high school students showed:

— 22% of adults and 20% of high school students think it "seems possible" the Holocaust never happened.

— 28% of adults and 39% of high school students do not know to what the term "Holocaust" refers.

— 21% of adults and 26% of high school students do not believe the Holocaust is relevant today.

The survey, taken by the Roper Organization for the American Jewish Committee, is believed scientifically accurate within plus-or-minus 4% for adults and 5% for students.

The survey results reflect not only "an amazing level of ignorance and/or misunderstanding" but also a disturbing pattern of denial by those lacking the moral courage to criticize events such as the Holocaust, according to Dan McGee, professor of religion and ethics at Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

"That group which says they

think the Holocaust never happened is the most distressing part," McGee said. "I can tolerate ignorance better than I can tolerate callous indifference."

But historian William R. Estep Jr. offered little sympathy for either the ignorant or the indifferent.

"It is inexcusable ignorance,"

the third day after it was liberated by Allied forces. More than 51,000 people died in the camp.

Forty-nine years later, he still vividly recalls his first impressions of the camp: naked human bodies stacked like firewood, five and six deep in four-wheeled carts. The gut-wrenching stench of human waste and unspeakable filth rising from open pits. And towering above brick walls and barbed wire — smokestacks, bearing mute testimony to the camp's infamous furnaces.

"I did not think personally that society could do such a thing. I could not believe the populace would permit such a thing to happen," Kendrick said.

He recalled the stark contrast between the 40- by 150-foot barracks where up to nearly 2,000 prisoners were

forced to sleep on board beds four decks deep and the lavish quarters of Nazi SS officers where they kept female prisoners as concubines.

"Some of the living quarters had lampshades made of human skin," he said, recalling the still-visible concentration camp tattoos of prisoners on the shades.

Baptists in particular, said Henry Smith, professor of world religions at Southwestern, need to get back to their roots, reclaiming their commitment to freedom of conscience by standing forthrightly for religious liberty — a cause that historically united Baptists and Jews.

"Rather than engaging in a revision of history that is hurtful to everybody, we should seek mutual understanding, mutual respect, and stand up for religious liberty," Smith said. "If we did, a lot more healthy relationships would develop."

Camp is public relations director for the Baptist General Convention of T

Germany



said Estep, distinguished professor emeritus of church history at Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. The belief is "symptomatic" of a society that gets virtually all of its information through electronic media, he added.

Anyone who denies the reality of the Holocaust hasn't spoken to veterans of the European Theater of Operations, according to Junius Kendrick, a member of White Pond Church, Prattville, Ala.

"We were pulled in from 80 miles away for the express purpose of seeing just what had been going on in the concentration camps," Kendrick said.

Kendrick, who served as a medic with the 456th Anti-aircraft Battalion, entered the Buchenwald concentration camp April 21, 1944,



## Hungry for the Word

John Carter, International Service Corps worker, hands out evangelistic tracts after preaching in the Kalanje refugee camp in southern Malawi. Each time the Virginia native hands out tracts, he is mobbed with people wanting a copy. While most of the refugees are illiterate, some will keep the printed message and find someone to read it to them. (BP photo by Charles Ledford)

Baptist Record

005-DTM 291 5-27  
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May 27, 1993